

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 L-03 /049 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN
TO USMISSION GENEVA SWITZERLAND
INFO SECSTATE WASH DC 4706

UNCLAS MANAMA 1167

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLAB, ILO, BA
SUBJECT: ILO -- 63RD INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE:
BAHRAIN DELEGATION

REF: STATE 104945

1. FIRST EVER BAHRAIN DELEGATION TO ILO MEETING CONSISTS OF FOLLOWING: (A) MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS: SHAIKH ISA BIN MOHAMMAD AL KHALIFA; (B) MANSOOR RADHI, MINISTRY OF LABOR; (C) KAMIL AL-SALEH, MINISTRY OF LABOR, LABOR COURT DISPUTES SPECIALIST; (D) HASSAN ZAINALEBEDIN, BAHRAIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY; (E) ABDULLAH AL-KHAAL (WORKER DELEGATE).

2. IN MOST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES WHICH IT ATTENDS, BAHRAIN PURSUES AN APPROPRIATELY SELF-EFFACING ROLE. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THIS IS THE FIRST CONFERENCE AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION WILL ATTEND SINCE BAHRAIN'S ADMISSION TO THE ILO IN DECEMBER 1976, WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THIS WILL DEFINITELY BE THE CASE.

3. IN MATTERS OF POLITICAL CONTROVERSY, SUCH AS THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST ISRAEL, BAHRAIN CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE DEEPLY ENFOLDING IN THE ARAB BLOC. IF THAT
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BLOC SPLITS BETWEEN 'RADICALS' AND 'MODERATES', BAHRAIN WILL BE WITH THE 'MODERATE' GROUP, ASSUMING THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS FOUND IN THAT GROUP.

4. ON OTHER ISSUES EXPECTED TO ARISE IN THE ILC SESSION, BAHRAIN CAN BE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW THE ARAB/OPEC GROUP CONSENSUS. LIKE SAUDI ARABIA, BAHRAIN HARDLY QUALIFIES

FOR ILO MEMBERSHIP IN ANY SERIOUS SENSE, I. E., THERE IS NOTHING VAGUELY APPROACHING A FREE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN BAHRAIN WHERE STRIKES AND 'GROUP ACTIONS' ARE ILLEGAL. BAHRAINI OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE MINISTER, WERE BANKING ON THE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION LAST SUMMER WHICH WOULD LEGALIZE UNIONS. THIS DID NOT TAKE PLACE. A NEW LABOR LAW WAS ENACTED BUT WITH THE NOTABLE OMISSION OF ANY MENTION OF UNIONS. RECENTLY, AS SEPARATELY REPORTED, BAHRAIN HAS DROPPED THE COVERAGE OF EXPATRIATE LABOR UNDER ITS 1976 SOCIAL INSURANCE LAW. AGAIN, THE MINISTER AND OTHER LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS ARE AWARE OF THE ILO INSISTENCE ON EQUAL TREATMENT FOR LABOR, CITIZENS OF NON-CITIZENS. ON BOTH THESE SCORES, THE BAHRAINIS ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF THEIR SHORTCOMINGS. THEY WILL DO WHAT THEY CAN TO STAY OUT OF THE LIMELIGHT AND HIDE BEHIND THE SAUDI SKIRTS (SAUDI ARABIA OF COURSE BEING LIABLE TO THE SAME KIND OF CRITICISM ON THE SAME ISSUES).

5. RECOMMENDED CONTACTS FOR USDEL: (A) THE MINISTER, A MEMBER OF THE RULING FAMILY OF BAHRAIN IS LIKELY TO BE IN CONSTANT AND CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SAUDI DELEGATION; HE IS APPROACHABLE AND PLEASANT, BUT SOMEWHAT VAGUE AND IMPRECISE (ADDRESSED AS 'EXCELLENCY' INITIALLY AND THEN 'SHAIKH ISA'); (B) HASSAN ZAINALEBEDIN, A YOUNG, DYNAMIC BUSINESSMAN FROM PROMINENT LOCAL FAMILY, IS QUITE APPROACHABLE AND WOULD BE THE BEST CONTACT (HE WOULD BE AMENABLE TO PRIVATE DRINK INVITATION AS LONG AS NO SAUDIS WERE AROUND); (C) THE WORKER DELEGATE, ABDULLAH AL-KHAAL, IS REPORTEDLY OUTSPOKEN AND BRIGHT BUT THIS EMBASSY HAS HAD NO CONTACT WITH HIM. HE IS THE ELECTED SPOKESMAN FOR THE SECOND LARGEST LABOR FORCE
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GROUPING IN BAHRAIN, THE ALUMINIUM SMELTER WORKERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 30-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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